

Amendments to the Claims

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A reinforced molded article comprising:
 - a main portion having opposing major surfaces defining a thickness of said main portion; and
 - a protrusion integrally molded with said main portion and protruding from one of said surfaces, said protrusion having a thickness of less than the thickness of said main portion and less than about 0.1", said protrusion having a height of at least twice the thickness of said protrusion,
 - said main portion and said protrusion being formed from a material comprising at least one thermoplastic, and reinforcing particles, the reinforcing particles comprise about 2% to about 15%, by volume, of a total volume of the material,
 - said reinforcing particles each comprising one or more layers, at least 50% of said reinforcing particles being less than about 20 layers thick, at least 99% of said reinforcing particles being less than about 30 layers thick, said layers comprising platelets having a thickness of between about 0.7 nm and 1.2 nm, and wherein at least some of the reinforcing particles are not completely exfoliated and are up to about 30 layers thick.
2. (Original) A reinforced molded article according to claim 1, further comprising a decorative material adhered to an opposite surface disposed on a side of said main portion opposite said one of said surfaces.
3. (Previously presented) A reinforced molded article according to claim 2, wherein said decorative material is made from a material selected from a group consisting of vinyl, poly(vinyl chloride)/acrylonitrile butadiene styrene, thermoplastic olefin, polypropylene, and thermoplastic polyurethane.
4. (Previously presented) A reinforced molded article according to claim 2, wherein said decorative material is made from fabric, or carpeting.

5. (Previously presented) A reinforced molded article according to claim 4, wherein said decorative material further includes at least one of a bonded foam layer and a film layer disposed in contact with said opposite surface.
6. (Withdrawn) A method of producing a reinforced article comprising a main portion having opposing major surfaces defining a thickness of said main portion, a protrusion integrally molded with said main portion and protruding from one of said surfaces, said protrusion having a thickness of less than the thickness of said main portion and less than about 0.1", said protrusion having a height of at least twice the thickness of said protrusion, said method comprising: preparing a melt of at least one thermoplastic, and about 2% to about 15%, by volume, of reinforcing particles, said particles each comprising one or more layers, at least 50% of said reinforcing particles being less than about 20 layers thick, at least 99% of said reinforcing particles being less than about 30 layers thick, and said layers comprising platelets having a thickness of between about 0.7 nm and 1.2 nm; compressing said melt between die surfaces at a pressure of less than 3,000PSI, said die surfaces having recesses corresponding to the shape of said protrusions, receiving said melt, including said 2%-15% by volume reinforcing particles, in said recesses so that said melt conforms to the shape of said recesses; cooling said melt, wherein cooled portions of said melt received in said recesses form said reinforced protrusions.
7. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 6, further comprising: placing a decorative material between said die surfaces and contacting said melt with said decorative material so as to adhere said decorative material to said melt.
8. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 7, wherein said decorative material contacts a surface of said die cavity opposite said surface having said recesses.
9. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 7, wherein said decorative material is made from a material selected from a group consisting of vinyl, PVC/ABS, TPO, PP, and TPU.

10. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 7, wherein said decorative material includes a first layer made of fabric, cloth, or carpeting, and a second layer comprising at least one of a bonded foam layer and a film layer disposed in contact with said first layer, said second layer contacting said melt between said die surfaces to prevent said melt from permeating through said first layer.